

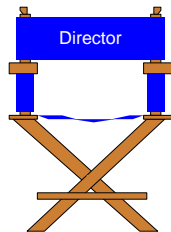
ACES Field Report



August 2001

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Ms. Dian Stoskopf

Numerous changes are happening in ACES that benefit soldiers and their families, civilian employees, and you. Though my Update focuses primarily on eArmyU, there is so much going on with the other programs that my staff will highlight in their section of the Update.



eArmyU Successes

As was reported in the last Military Educator, the Army successfully implemented the eArmyU initiative (formerly known as Army University Access Online {AUAO}) at the three initial installations: Forts Benning, Campbell and Hood. On 15 Jun 01, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) successfully launched eArmyU.com portal release 3.0. Fully integrated with Army legacy systems, the portal now offers significantly enhanced functionality for the various users: students, counselors, program mentors, and program managers.

Education. Front and Center.

eArmyU Portal Testing



Before formally accepting this contract deliverable, Army will conduct an independent acceptance test of portal functionality based on requirements specified in the Performance-Based Work Statement (PBWS) and PwC's Technical Proposal. We expect to complete

testing no later than 13 Jul 01. Contractors from Booz-Allen & Hamilton along with Gail Lumpkin, an employee of Logicon, a Northrop Grumman Company (formerly PRC Litton) on HQDA Education Division staff, and Lee Harvey, eArmyU Program Director, are conducting the testing. Bill Marrs, (Fort Hood) and Suzi Weisman (Fort Jackson) also participated in the testing and calling their findings to the help desk. Bill and Suzi came to Washington, D.C., to work at PwC's office to conduct cycle 2 testing. They have, indeed, been instrumental in ensuring the portal does what we need done.

HQ Education Division
200 Stovall Street, STE 3N07
Alexandria, VA 22332-0472

OCONUS testing for connectivity was conducted at sites in Korea, Germany, and Puerto Rico from 12-14 Jun 01. Our real test will probably be finding ways to make eArmyU viable in Korea.

EArmyU Changes

What are some of the changes since we last reported to you? First of all, PwC has increased the number of academic partners from 16 to 24. There would have been more but we asked PwC to stop bringing in new schools until after we had completed our distance learning needs assessment. We want to make sure we have the right schools and the right degree programs before we expand any further. Thanks to you all, we have most of the data we need. We have just completed the analysis, thanks to Dr. Paula Harbecke, and will take a look at what we think we need to do.

In the meantime, we have gone from 16 institutions offering 42-degree programs to 24 institutions offering 90-degree programs. The institutions and their degree programs are listed on the slide.

Challenges

The biggest problem we have encountered so far is late textbooks. The BK Group, textbook vendor, was responsible for delivery of books but was unable to meet the requirement. As a result, PwC has terminated their contract and awarded one to MBS Direct, an affiliate of Barnes and Noble. MBS Direct has already jumped in and is very responsive to requirements. PwC has proposed not requiring academic institutions to transfer their Course Management System (CMS) over to Blackboard. Since Blackboard is the only CMS that we are aware of that provides the common look and feel, we are not sure that we will agree to allow PwC to create their own proprietary system. Dr. Homer Krout is helping us work through this issue.

Gail Lumpkin has been working hard to create the capability for the DA Form 1821 data to transfer via the portal. This capability is not there now since PwC captures data on postsecondary enrollments only by undergraduate and graduate and not by lower level, upper level and graduate as EDMIS does.

Portal Training

PwC has given us a draft of the training plan for ACES use worldwide. We have asked PwC to include some items that were missing from their first draft. We've also asked that the training be web-based, like our EDMIS module, so that we can provide training to all 113 AECs around the world, as quickly as possible. We expect training to be available to you in August. PwC will also conduct training on the eArmyU portal at the Counselor Workshop in Coronado, Calif., in Aug 01. This will be a great opportunity for counselors to get familiar with this important new educational program. Recommend all ACES personnel acquaint themselves with the program by visiting the eArmyU.com website.

Laptop and Printer Costs

Believe it or not, the laptop and printer that we issued to soldiers from January to March timeframe are no longer "best value". In only 6 months, other companies have exceeded the capabilities of our Compaq computer and printer. As a result, and in accordance with eArmyU contractual requirements, PwC has contracted to Hewlett Packard to refresh the program technology package.

Starting with Sep 01 enrollments, soldiers will receive a HP XE-3 laptop computer and a HP DeskJet 930c printer. Key elements of this change are a faster processor, larger hard drive, and monitor for the same price. For an additional \$40.00 a piece, the Army is buying eArmyU soldiers an integrated LAN card for their laptop!

Replacement Laptop/Printer Insurance

To cover soldiers who encounter problems with theft or loss of their laptop, the Hartford Company, through the Bay Area Insurance Group, will offer an excellent, cost-effective two-year policy for \$84. In the event of damage, loss, or theft, soldiers will be furnished with a replacement laptop/printer after paying the \$100 deductible.

eArmyU School	Cert.	Assoc.	Bach.	Mast.	Total
Anne Arundel Community College		3			3
Baker College	1		3	1	5
Central Texas College	3	5			8
Cochise College	2				2
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University		1	2		3
Excelsior College				2	2
Fayetteville Technical Community College		1			1
Franklin University			6	1	7
Kansas State University			1	1	2
Lansing Community College	1	1			2
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University			1		1
Northern Virginia Community College		1			1
Northwest Missouri State University			2		2
Nova Southeastern University			1	3	4
Pennsylvania State University World Campus				1	1
Rio Salado College	9	3			12
Saint Joseph's College of Maine	2		3	1	6
Saint Leo University			5		5
State University of New York Empire State College			1		1
Thomas Edison State College		3	4	2	9
Troy State University		2	3		5
University of Texas at Arlington				1	1
University of the Incarnate Word	2		2	2	6
Utah State University				1	1
Grand Total	20	20	34	16	90

Email Address Portal List

As you may know, we are creating a list of email addresses for those who will need to access the portal. PwC will use the email address list to establish you as a portal user.

EArmyU Expansion Sites

Expansion sites for FY02 have been discussed at all levels and the new SECARMY has been briefed on eArmyU. We are awaiting guidance on how to proceed. As soon as we have that guidance, we will inform you. You can see from the summary chart that the level of activity at our three initial installations remains quite high.

monumental ways with their support of the search for SOCAD partners and the countless phone calls that were taken, talks they had, and meetings attended and

conducted.

We're not out of the weeds yet, but without so many other folks out there who have supported us through this entire exciting time in ACES history, we would not have gotten to this point!

Army University Access Online – Totals From 16 Jan 01 through 3 Aug 01											
Installations	Briefed	Counseled	Signed Agrmnts ¹	Tech Paks Issued ²	New Students ³	Enrolled/7 5% TA Courses ⁴	Course Withdrawl ⁵	Extend	Reenlist	Reup >12	Reup <12
Ft. Benning	3,370	2,294	1,655	1,557	1,085	193	8	141	154	114	40
Ft. Campbell	6,165	4,085	1,968	1,920	1,029	127	20	260	246	141	105
Ft. Hood	3,927	3,927	3,013	2,470	2,499	109	157	80	31	21	10
Total	13,462	10,306	6,636	5,947	4,613	429	185	481	431	276	155

Comments:

1 Number of AUAO Participation Agreements (PAs) returned to the Education Center signed and approved by Commander

2 Soldiers with signed AUAO have received a technology package and are registered

3 Soldiers with signed AUAO PAs never enrolled or have not enrolled for one year or longer

4 Soldiers issued a technology package and registered in AUAO who are concurrently registered using 75% TA

5-Courses withdrawn from.

Council of Academic Management

PwC created a Council of Academic Management (CAM) to assist the eArmyU team in ensuring quality in our online program. The Sloan Foundation, one of the leaders in online education, sponsors the CAM. The CAM membership is recognized as consisting of higher education's thought leaders in distance learning. The council members have agreed to contribute to the success of eArmyU by serving as independent program advisors/consultants with emphasis on quality improvement (rather than quality assurance) in learning effectiveness, along with faculty and student satisfaction. The CAM has formulated goals, representative processes, and metrics for the quality pillars of student satisfaction; program access; learning effectiveness; faculty satisfaction; cost effectiveness; and institutional commitment. Once finalized, these goals, processes, and metrics will be sent to eArmyU program providers who will be requested to describe their individual processes and metrics. Army is, indeed, out front with this cutting-edge initiative.

EArmyU Soldiers on the Move

In the meantime, we know that soldiers enrolled in eArmyU from one of the initial sites have hit your installations. It has been amazingly quiet. Either you all have figured out how to work with the eArmyU soldiers, or they have gone back to Forts Benning, Campbell and/or Hood to seek assistance. We are moving along as quickly as we can to get guidance to you. We sent the revised AR 621-5 (chapter that deals with eArmyU), the DA Form XXXX, the eArmyU Participation Agreement, and the ACES Implementation Plan to the MACOM Directors of Education and Education Services Officers at the potential expansion sites and the three initial sites. As usual, we have more changes to make. As soon as we make them, we will get that information out to all of ACES Army-wide.

Kudos

A lot of credit goes to the entire ACES staff at Forts Benning, Campbell, and Hood for paving the way and working many of the bugs out of the program before we present it to you. Thank you Elaine Livingston, for your ever-positive, can-do attitude and approach to eArmyU. Thanks also goes to Bill Kinnison at Fort Hood and Les Bedenbaugh at Fort Jackson for allowing Bill Marrs and Suzi Weisman to spend time away from their duties to conduct testing on the portal. And thank you to Bill Kinnison and Bob Faries (& Elaine) for never complaining, however heavy the load became. Also, Dave Eyler, Andy Anderson, and Steve Kime have certainly contributed to the success of eArmyU in

AARTS, EDMIS, and eArmyU

With the excitement and attention surrounding the eArmyU Portal, some may be wondering what this may mean for some of the legacy ACES systems such as AARTS and EDMIS. Are they at all affected, and do they exchange information? Is there going to be duplication of effort getting information into new and old systems? Nobody wants to double enter large amounts of information in order to serve our soldiers.

Good news: AARTS and EDMIS, exchange soldier data with the eArmyU Portal. ACES takes advantage of these administrative systems' databases and provides a soldier's unofficial transcript to the eArmyU Portal. From AARTS, ACES transfers the credit bearing college level test data and military course history; from EDMIS, ACES transfers a soldier's postsecondary academic history.

Via the portal a soldier has access to their information in a degree-planning module. The soldier can determine which courses or tests fulfill the degree requirements and plans accordingly. The portal also provides to EDMIS soldier enrollments and grades data. This data, when downloaded into an Army Education Center's (AEC) EDMIS database, becomes part of the soldier's DA Form 669.

The transfer of data is done through an file transfer protocol (FTP) process. For AARTS, the data is directly transferred from the AARTS database to the portal. No data is transferred from the portal to AARTS. The EDMIS process is a bit more complicated. The postsecondary course history is collected from each

AEC's database and sent to a centralized data bank, stored at CONUS Theater Network Operations & Security Center (TNSOC). The portal sends a file to the central data bank and retrieves the course data for soldiers in the eArmyU Program. This data is then incorporated in the eArmyU's database.

The eArmyU Portal provides EDMIS with course enrollments and grades. These enrollments are downloaded to the installation database and automatically processed. Manual intervention is only necessary when an enrollment does not conform to EDMIS database requirements. If this occurs, the record is rejected and the functional or assistant functional administrators make the necessary corrections and manually process the enrollment or grade.

CAREER PROGRAM 31 Update

AN "ACES" OF ONE

Last August, Mr. Dave Synder, the Deputy Assistant Secretary (Civilian Personnel Policy), directed a bottom-up review of the Easy ACCES Centralized Referral System. The review was completed in Mar 01, and the Functional Chiefs Representatives (FCRs) were briefed at the 3 Apr 01 meeting of the Civilian Personnel Policy Committee. The FCRs endorsed the proposed interim changes to Easy ACCES as well as the longer-range direction for the Army to recruit and fill jobs.

The Easy ACCES has become less effective in producing high-quality and available candidates for Army senior-level positions (GS-11 and above). The system was designed as an internal merit promotion tool in a time when the pipeline of interested candidates was robust. Due to downsizing and the forecast retirement bubble, the number of high quality and available Army employees has been reduced. Easy ACCES was not specifically designed to attract outside candidates and has proven to be a barrier to recruitment. In light of the imminent retirement bubble, the Army now depends on an influx of outside candidates to produce a robust applicant supply for its future. Registered employees have neglected to update their availability, and over time the tendency for ratings to escalate has made it increasingly difficult to distinguish among candidates. The use of an expensive measure, such as accomplishment ratings, has been assessed not to meet the test of sound business practices because it fails to contribute sufficiently to making distinctions among candidates. Finally, Easy ACCES duplicates the functionality of other automated staffing tools, such as RESUMIX. Thus, Mr. Synder has authorized a phased transition in which interim improvements will be made to Easy ACCES, followed by adoption of the unified Army tool for applying for consideration for placement and promotion.

To reduce costs and improve responsiveness of Easy ACCES, we are making the following changes: employee accomplishment write-ups and associated ratings are eliminated; supervisors no longer need to assign weights to core and supplemental knowledge, skills, and abilities when requesting referral lists; and, for candidates interested in lateral referral only, registration is being simplified. Individuals interested in lateral referral only will no longer be required to provide ratings, but basic information, referral desires, and geographic availability. Ranked lateral lists will no longer be issued. Effective 9 Jul 01, before a referral list comes out, the new electronic interest and availability feature will generate a list of available ACES candidates who have expressed interest.

Such changes have noteworthy benefits. They include a continuously updated referral inventory with no need to wait for rating panels. The process will be streamlined with faster and easier registration and requests for referral. To reflect the above changes, we are now updating the Easy ACCES website and associated instructions for registration and referral.

Concurrent with the review of Easy ACCES, a top-to-bottom review of the way the Army currently recruits and fills jobs was initiated. One premise is that the RESUMIX automated staffing tool selected for DoD-wide use will be the basic centerpiece of a modernized recruitment and placement system. Although RESUMIX has been fielded to all Army regions, the processes associated with its use need to be

reengineered, standardized, and simplified for use by applicants as well as staffing personnel. A concept design now in development features web-based tools, a single point of entry for all candidates interested in Army employment, and much better and more intuitive feedback for candidates seeking employment. Until this new requirement and referral system comes on-line in 2002, the Army will continue to fill senior-level (GS-11 and above) career program jobs through Easy ACCES as well as through merit promotion announcements written by Functional Chiefs. NO decision has been made to cancel the central referral or management aspects of the career management system. There are benefits to central management that must be considered as part of the final design.

Reminder!!

Effective 9 Jul 01, Career Management Operations Branch began querying, by email, all active CP-31 registrants who have indicated geographical availability for specific locations and meet the screening criteria for the indicated vacancy. The email query is to determine interest and availability. To receive further referral consideration of the identified vacant position, you **MUST** respond within FIVE-calendar days after receiving the email inquiry. REMINDER: the email address you save in your Easy ACCES registration record must be unique. It cannot be shared. You may update your email address field at any time.

Reminder!!!

Any time you save a change to your registration, you should return to the Registration Status and Update Menu to reconfirm your eligibility for referral. If your status on the Registration Status and Update Menu reads "Eligible for Referral: NO," you will not be considered for any Easy ACCES referral listing as long as your record remains in a suspended status. To obtain information about the reasons for your incomplete status, click on the View Reasons for Incomplete Status hyperlink located at the bottom right of the screen.

Easy Army Civilian Career Evaluation System (Easy ACCES)

Career Program 31 (CP-31) implemented online career registration in January 1999. More than two years later, Army Continuing Education System (ACES) boasts 292 CP-31 careerists fully registered in Easy ACCES. Since the last field update, 64 more CP-31 careerists completed the Easy ACCES registration process. Remember, to be considered for career advancement and professional development opportunities, you must be fully registered!

CP-31 Easy ACCES Statistics (13 Jul 00)

Average Ratings	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13	GS 14	GS 15
Employee Knowledges	3.44	3.85	4.07	4.52	4.44	5.00
Management Knowledges	3.30	3.63	3.91	4.67	4.33	5.00
Management Abilities	4.20	4.36	4.44	4.93	5.00	5.00

Easy ACCES Just Got Easier!!!

Registration in Easy ACCES is now easier than ever! Accomplishment narratives and associated rating sessions have been abolished. That's right!!! Easy ACCES now has six easy steps to full registration: 1) Part A - Employee's Statement, 2) Part B - Referral Desires, 3) Part C - Employee's Knowledge Ratings, 4) DA Form 4338R - Geographical Availability Record, 5) Resume Qualification Record, 6) Part E - Supervisor/Reviewer Knowledge and Ability Ratings. Furthermore, individuals interested in lateral referral only are not required to complete Part E - Supervisor/Reviewer Knowledge and Ability Ratings. So, what are you waiting for? Register now!

To register or check your registration status, follow the instructions at the Easy ACCES website <https://cpol.army.mil/ezaccses/eahome1.html>. You can also access this page through the new Civilian Personnel homepage at <http://cpol.army.mil/home/home.html>. If you don't understand Easy ACCES, contact your installation Activity Career Program Manager (usually the ESO) or the MACOM Career Program Manager for assistance. If you experience technical difficulties you are unable to resolve, you may request a waiver by contacting Ms. Mary Norton at (703) 325-9281 or (DSN) 221-9281; email: mary.norton@asamra.hoffman.army.mil

Competitive Professional Development Opportunities for FY 02

Nominations are currently being accepted for CP-31 Army Civilian Training, Education, and Development System (ACTEDS) competitive professional development (CPD) funded opportunities for FY02. Nomination packages must be received by 14 Sept.

Eligible careerists are strongly encouraged to compete for these exciting opportunities, especially the developmental assignments. The application process is not nearly as difficult as it would appear and the return on your investment is substantial. Evaluative comments from those who have participated in developmental assignments have been excellent, many deem it the most rewarding professional experience of their career.

If you are interested in finding out more about these exciting professional development opportunities, please review the ACTEDS CPD FY02 Catalog at <http://www.cpol.army.mil/train/catalog/>. It is time to begin thinking seriously about your future. Apply for ACTEDS CPD training today! Remember, GS-9 counselors are now eligible to compete for these training opportunities.

HOOAH!!

Dian

Current Army Education Issues Workshop

Ms. Dawn Bilodeau

The Current Army Education Issues Workshop for ACES counselors is less than a month away! Over 100 ACES counselors, education services specialist, and Department of Army interns will travel to Coronado, CA in August to partake in this premier event. The Naval Amphibious Base Coronado (adjacent to San Diego) will provide the conference facilities and accommodations for attendees. The workshop, located at Club Coronado, will officially convene on the morning of 21 Aug and run through COB on 23 Aug.



We are pleased with the strong interest expressed in an ACES workshop for counselors. ACES will use ACTEDS CPD funds to pay the way for 90 CP-31 careerists! Fund cite letters have been distributed to selected careerists and should be used to obtain travel orders. Upon receipt of travel orders, a copy must be submitted to HQDA for final approval.

A great deal of time and effort has gone into workshop planning to make this the best and most valuable experience for

ACES counselors. The workshop schedule is packed with hands-on training sessions to include eArmyU, tuition assistance, veterans benefits, SOCAD, modernized EDMIS, and much, much more. In addition, attendees have the opportunity to embark on an Assault Craft Harbor Tour hosted by the U.S. Navy, and venture into San Diego's Gaslamp District on an Old Town Trolley Tour. See you there!!!

Education 2001: A Voyage to the Future

The Council of College and Military Educators (CCME) held its annual symposium, *Education 2001: A Voyage to the Future*, aboard the Queen Mary Hotel in Long Beach, California. CCME membership is a coalition of representatives from military organizations involved with voluntary education and representatives of the colleges and universities that provide the educational programs to Service members worldwide. The Symposium serves as a forum for professional development of its membership through the exchange of ideas and information from numerous constituencies. More than 300 participants attended this year's Symposium, making it the largest CCME gathering ever.

The Symposium included 3 days of speaker and panel presentations on a wide variety of subjects ranging from adult continuing education issues in general to military education programs in particular. Those in control of military education policy at DOD and the individual Services shared their ideas and concerns about 100 percent tuition assistance, new Service initiatives such as the Navy College Partnership Program and the Army University Access Online, lingering Service problems such as "contracting-out" efforts, and other issues affecting military education personnel and programs. More overarching issues such as transferability among differing accrediting regimes, changing lifelong learning trends, and certification as an alternative to degree programs in pursuit of professional development were presented. Panels consisting of College Presidents, ESOs from all Services, and success stories in military education rounded out the general sessions. Finally, a series of concurrent sessions one afternoon gave attendees the choice of attending more narrowly focused presentations on such subjects as National Guard partnerships, Navy College Program implementation, Tech-Prep applications to the military, a Virtual Counseling Center, and others.

The capstone event of the Symposium was the final evening banquet at which several awards were presented. Ms. Dian Stoskopf (left), Director Army Continuing Education System, received the John Brian Service and Leadership Award from Mebane Harrison, CCME President. The award is presented to a government employee for excellence in military education.

The 2002 CCME Symposium will be in February in Phoenix, Ariz.
(DANTES INFORMATION BULLETIN - May 2001)

Congratulations!



Ms. Susan Ayers



EDMIS Update

EDMIS version 11.03 is almost ready for use by the field. Despite a contract protest that delayed software development and testing, the EDMIS changes required for eArmyU will be tested at Fort Campbell before it is sent to the field. See the eArmyU article in this ACES Update for more details about EDMIS/eArmyU.

As soon as EDMIS passes the live test, v.11.03 will be installed at Forts Benning and Hood. The next major EDMIS change will be v.11.04 which will provide the capability to capture data and print the new ACES Feeder Worksheet. This worksheet provides the EDMIS data for the DA Form 1821. We expect that all EDMIS sites will be able to capture this data for the FY02 first quarter report.

The ACES EDMIS Team members are: Ms. Susan Ayers, Dr. Homer Krout, Dr. Debb Bonacorda, Ms. Gail Lumpkin, and Mr. Tom Heidenthal.

EDMIS Training

Ms. Ayers conducted two EDMIS training classes at Fort Hood in April. Unfortunately, the demand for this training far exceeded the 30 seats available in Fort Hood's two new state-of-the-art computer labs. Hopefully, we will be able to accommodate everyone during the FY 02 training classes (TBD).

Mr. Bill Marrs hosted the training, served as instructor for the advanced class, and ensured that all had a very positive experience. Mr. Chuck Wilson, ACES counselor, served as Mr. Marrs' assistant. Ms. Suzy Weisman, EDMIS Functional Administrator (FA) at Fort Jackson, and Ms. Virginia Lacey, FA at Fort Sill, did an outstanding job as instructors for the beginner class.

CP-31 Intern Program Update

The CP-31 Intern Program is alive and well. In June, we initiated two new interns into the world of Army Education: Ms. Tricia Bolyard (USAREUR) and Ms. Rebecca Murphy (USARPAC). There is currently one recruit action pending for USAREUR. Please join us in extending these individuals a warm welcome to ACES!

Unfortunately, the CP-31 intern program will also experience a decrease in numbers this fall. USAREC intern, Ms. Candice Smith, has left an ACES internship to pursue other endeavors. In addition, three interns will graduate the program this year: Ms. Dawn Bilodeau (HQDA ACES) in Aug, Ms. Lisa Law (EUSA) in Sep, and Mr. Patrick Thomas (EUSA) in Oct. We congratulate you all on your internship achievements and welcome you as full-fledged CP-31 careerists!

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION CONFERENCES

The Advanced Distributed Learning
Vision

"Provide access to the highest quality education and training, tailored to individual needs, delivered cost effectively, anywhere anytime."

<http://www.adlnet.or>



<http://www.sheeo.org/>



http://www.wam.umd.edu/~mlhall/teach_tech.html

Find out about local Technology Education Conferences by going to one of these web sites. Remember, these are suggested sites that are not necessarily endorsed by ACES or the U.S.



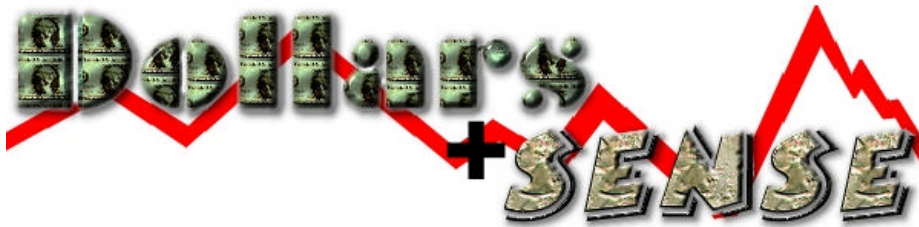
<http://www.nea.org/technology/nsba/>



<http://www.thejournal.com/conferences>



<http://www.eduplace.com/techcent/staff/conf.html>



Mr. Scott Downing

There are four current budget issues:

- (1) Unfinanced requirement (UFR) for tuition assistance (TA)
- (2) Planning for possible implementation of 100% TA in FY03
- (3) Review of Service Based Costing (SBC)
- (4) Revision of DA Form 1821 Quarterly Report

We have had UFRs for TA every year since FY99 when the standard DoD TA policy was implemented. Currently a command letter is being staffed with the senior leadership of the Army to ensure continuity of TA pending distribution of the UFR. We have experienced continued growth in the postsecondary program and anticipate that it will continue and expand at 100 percent TA

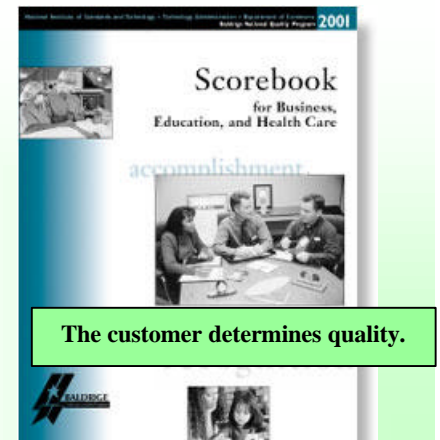
when that is implemented in FY03. We identified funding for 100 percent TA in the FY03-07 Mini-Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and it was validated.

MACOM POCs for SBC have been collecting obligation and pacing measure data for FY00. It is important that Education Service Officers (ESOs) and MACOM Directors of Education (DoE) work with their resource management SBC POCs as they collect the FY01 data. This will eventually provide us with an important requirements validation tool to defend our resources in the POM.

We have revised the DA Form 1821 ACES Quarterly Report and included the changes that were recommended by the 1821 Process Action Team. The draft AR 621-5 is currently being staffed. We

anticipate converting to the revised DA Form 1821 for the first reporting quarter of FY02. We will provide MACOM DoEs the Excel spreadsheet with instructions in October 01.

Mr. Scott Downing attended the Malcolm Baldrige Award National Conference in April. He has shared the material with DA ACES staff and MACOM directors. These quality standards are used in the Army Community of Excellence competition. Mr. Downing recommends that ACES staffs become familiar with the quality standards and participate in the ACOE/APIC effort at their level.



PROGRAMS

Ms. Dee Flynn

The ACES' programs continue to change, while still meeting the needs of America's soldiers. The program manager's Field Update articles include short program reviews and what to expect later this year. Louie Chartier's GI to Jobs and Army Career Degrees programs are meeting more and more soldiers' needs. Janice Yoo is out there working the college credit by examination issue, while Lynn Steed is taking care of Army Personnel Testing and automation of basic skills. Mike Tevnan, new to our team, is working the Spouse Education Assistance Program. All of our program managers are working hard for you and the soldiers.



DANTES Testing *Ms. Janice Yoo*

Testing Numbers Down

A review of the DANTES web site's Voluntary Education Fact Sheets revealed that Army Education Center's figures for CLEP generals, CLEP subject exams, and DANTES subject standardized tests have dropped an

average of 10 percent per year from 1996 to 2000. A review of all Service's figures indicates that it is only the Army's testing numbers that are dropping.

The college credit by examination program can be beneficial in many ways. Earning credits by testing saves the soldiers and the Services money. Earning credits by testing saves time and brings degree completion closer to a reality.

Given the benefits and value that can be derived from the college credit by examination program, it is important to see if we can ascertain the reasons for the decline in testing. It's a question that

cannot be solved at the headquarters, so we are requesting email inputs on your observations, perspectives, and evaluations of the decline in testing for college credit within Army. Please send them to Ms. Janice Yoo at janice.yoo@hoffman.army.mil by the end of September. Through a survey that addresses these testing concerns along with other relevant topics will be sent out soon, your narrative inputs is another avenue for analyzing this issue.



Ms. Louie Chartier

Mr. Wilcox's presentation/discussion centered on where we are nationally with the "framework" for a national set of workforce standards. Congress created NSSB in 1994 for the purpose of building a voluntary national system of skill standards, assessment, and certification systems to enhance the ability of the U. S. workforce to compete effectively in the global economy.

What's the Licensing or Certification Benefit?

*"The new licensing and certification benefit allows the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to pay you, if you're eligible, for a test for a license or certification. You can receive reimbursement for approved licensing or certification tests you take on or after March 1, 2001." These tests must be specifically approved for the G.I. Bill. There is a question and answer flyer in the attachment section. *A New VA Benefit - Pays the Costs of a License or Certification Test

GI to Jobs Program Update

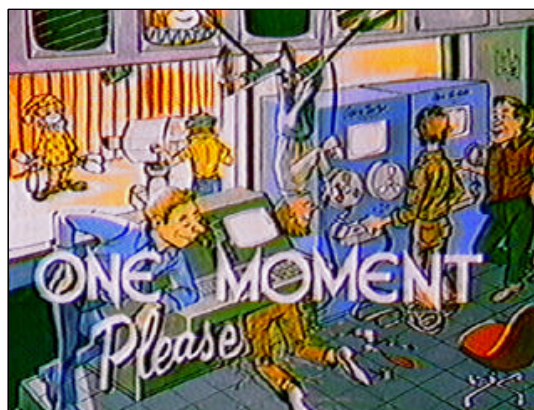
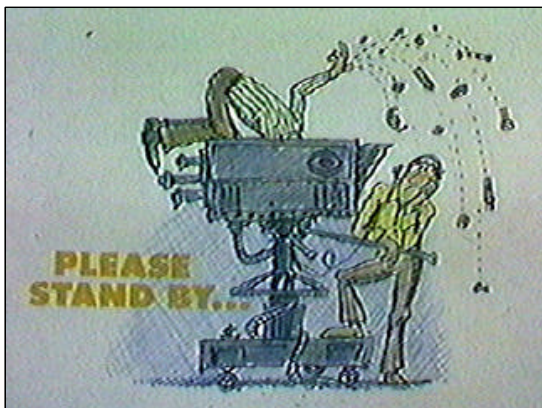
On 19 Jul 01, the Education Division conducted the fourth GI to Jobs Working Group Meeting. The Working Group heard presentations from two distinguished speakers, Ms. Phyllis Eisen, Executive Director, Center for Workforce Success, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), and Mr. David Wilcox, Executive Deputy Director, National Skill Standards Board (NSSB).

Ms. Eisen's presentation focused on the NAM's mission and goals. The NAM - 18 million people who make things in America - is the nation's largest multi-industry trade association. The NAM represents 14,000 members (small and mid-sized companies) and 350 member associations serving manufacturers and employees in every industrial sector and all 50 states.

Ms. Eisen is a much-recognized name in the workforce community.

Army Career Degree Program

The number of completed Career Degrees is 53, but STAY TUNED that number will be changing VERY SOON.





Army Personnel Testing Update

A recent unclassified message dated, 12 Jul 01, Subject: Army Personnel Testing (APT) Program Update, cited numerous reference messages and subjects to include: the new version of the APT Inventory, the April 2001 compromise policy and procedures, and the posting of all APT messages on the Extranet. Mrs. Zeina Zannelli and Mr. Christian Brock can give you information about new tests distributed and the status of our project with Army National Guard (ARNG).

Test Control Officer Workshop

The APT Test Control Officer (TCO) workshop will be held 26-27 Feb 02 in Coronado, CA. A TCO Interest Survey will be emailed to you soon soliciting topics, which need to be addressed during the workshop. We anticipate that ACES will fund some attendees while the MACOMs fund others. Maximum attendance will be approximately 100.

Army's Basic Skills Automation Update

In the fall of 1999, ACES, at the direction of Army leadership, embarked on an initiative to automate our Basic Skills instruction. One of the objectives for this project was to field an effective standardized instruction package, integrating commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) basic skills instruction software with current Army-specific Functional Academic Skills Training material.

Ms. Lynn Steed

We asked the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) to recommend COTS software that include reading, mathematics, and language training, as well as Science and English-as-a-second-language

instruction. They recommended for basic skills instruction: PassKey, Learning 2000, and PLATO and for ESL instruction: Rosetta Stone, Ellis, and New Dynamics English. Further, we asked them to conduct pilot tests of the COTS on three installations, using facilitators with the classes, and during deployments from three installations.

Fort Sill was selected for an installation pilot, as were Forts Hood and Stewart. Forts Hood and Stewart are also testing the deployment model, as is Fort Drum. We also asked HumRRO to analyze the installation model results of COTS software-supported classes, comparing them with results of students in classes using our current curriculum. The deployment model will determine the feasibility of providing stand-alone laptop-based instruction to soldiers in an unmonitored and unstructured environment. Following the analysis, HumRRO will recommend automated instruction to ACES. We should receive their recommendations this December.

A second objective of this initiative was to develop a web-based Management Information System (MIS), which would facilitate accurate and complete analysis, reporting of participation, results, and cost information. The Process Action Team (PAT), which met in Dec 00, provided us with a lot of information about data that would have to be tracked in our Basic Skills MIS. The development of the MIS is on track. The PAT members will continue to be requested to provide feedback to the developers as questions develop. The centralized distribution of the COTS software hinges on continued funding. It is unclear at this time if ACES will receive adequate funding to purchase and distribute the COTS software. We are awaiting decisions on UFR funding for FY01. If we are unsuccessful in FY01, we will see if money is available in FY02.

Army Test Changes

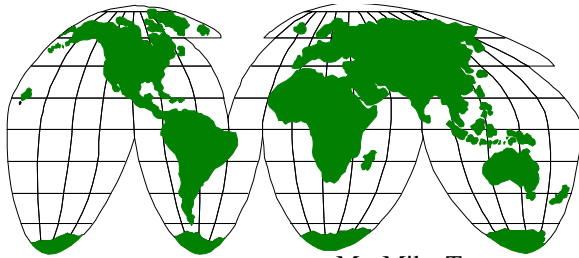
The Army is in the process of making changes to both the Armed Forces Classification Test (AFCT) and the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). It is anticipated that field APT sites will continue using the current AFCT, but beginning early in 2002, will use new composite scores.

The names of the composite scores will remain the same, but the formulas for computing them will become much more complex. The changes in the formulas will make it impossible to calculate the composite scores manually. The changes will not be implemented until Army Research Institute provides us with a new scoring program. The new scoring program will be posted on ACES Extranet for download when available; TCOs will be notified when it is available. With the new scoring program, TCOs will continue to find the raw scores for each subtest and insert the raw scores in the scoring program which will compute the composite scores.

In early 2002, OCONUS APT TCOs who conduct enlistment ASVAB testing will begin using the new ASVAB, Forms 25, 26, and 27. The new ASVABs will not include tests on Numerical Operations and Coding Speed. Eventually, these two subtests will also be eliminated from the AFCTs.

ACES will keep you posted as further decisions are made.

**Please contact your MACOM
for the
Extranet logon information.**



Mr. Mike Tevnan

The Reserve Component



*Today I declare that we are **The Army**--totally integrated, with a unity of purpose--no longer the one army. We are **The Army**, and we will march into the 21st Century as **The Army**. We acknowledge our components and their unique strengths. But we are **The Army**, and we will work to structure ourselves accordingly.*

General Eric K. Shinseki

Chief of Staff of the Army

(<http://www.paed.army.mil/acrc/index.html>.)



The most significant change in Army policy is the AC's commitment that whatever is done to the AC will be done to the RC.

General John M. Keane

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army

Annual ARFPC Meeting, 18 September 2000

During the Army re-engineering of the 1990s, organizational relationships changed due to transitions occurring within the Active Component (AC), U.S. Army Reserve (USAR), and Army National Guard (ARNG). The role of the Reserve Component (RC), consisting of the USAR and ARNG, has expanded from one of wartime augmentation to being an integral part of the base force. **The Army** is no longer just a concept, it is a guiding principle. ACES supports **The Army** with the alignment of AC, USAR and ARNG education programs and services under AR 621-5, providing one voice for a total Army education program. Currently, the USAR and the ARNG operate varying degrees of ACES programs and services which meet their unique needs and priorities. The biggest change is the reintroduction of Army Tuition Assistance (TA) for the RC after a 10-year absence. The Information Paper in the attachment section goes in to more detail regarding TA policies for the USAR and ARNG.

Army Family Action Plan Issue - Active Duty Spouse Tuition

One of the top six new issues in Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) is the request for Spouse Tuition Assistance (TA), aligned with soldier TA under Title 10 USC 2007. BG Frost, TAG, at the General Officers Steering Committee (GOSC), which is chaired by the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army presented this issue on 2 May. The GOSC recommended this issue remain active and ACES is researching this possibility along with alternatives. Presently there is no TA program for Army spouses similar to the soldier TA program. A spouse TA program continues to gain momentum as a benefit, supporting the Army's recruiting and retention effort and family morale.

Spouse Education Assistance Program

The Army Emergency Relief (AER) initiated a pilot Spouse Education Assistance Program (SEAP) for academic year (AY) 97-98, which provided educational grants to spouses of soldiers assigned to USAREUR. In Aug 00, the program expanded to include Korea, Japan, and Okinawa. This need-based grant program is centrally managed out of AER HQ to monitor activity and ensure standardization. The AER Board of Managers has indicated they will not expand the current program to spouses in Alaska, Hawaii, or CONUS. Highlights of this program are:

- Participation in this program has steadily increased. Elimination of the Department of Education, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) increased participation in AER's program.
- Of those using SEAP, 90% are enlisted soldier spouses, with 80% of these at E-6 and below.
- Cumulative Statistics:

Academic Year	Grants Awarded	Amount Awarded
97-98	847	\$204,306
98-99	874	\$232,115
99-00	1,289	\$339,767
00-01	<u>2,629</u>	<u>\$708,605</u>
TOTAL	5,639	\$1,484,793



Education Incentives & Counseling **Promises Made are Promises Kept**

Mr. John Rizkallah

Loan Repayment Program

The Education Incentives and Counseling Branch (EICB) receives numerous complaints from, as well as congressional inquiries on the behalf of soldiers who enlisted in the Army for the Loan Repayment Program (LRP) option. Many of these complaints may stem from the fact that these soldiers received neither sufficient counseling nor procedural information from the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC), nor from Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS) prior to coming on active duty.

The EICB often has great difficulty in promptly locating and contacting a LRP soldier who is required to provide EICB with additional information and loan documentation before the LRP repayment process can begin. The EICB does receive partial lists from USAREC on soldiers enlisting for the LRP incentive. In addition to the problem of incomplete lists, this office also experiences delays in contacting LRP soldiers because the Enlisted Distribution A System (EDAS) system, upon which we rely for mailing addresses, is frequently not up-to-date. Such delays may be quite costly to the soldier; the loan continues to accrue interest. The soldier is responsible for paying the interest.

Solution: Identifying and Counseling Loan Repayment Program Participants During Army Education Center Initial Inprocessing.

Help us help all soldiers by adopting the following procedures during your initial inprocessing counseling and/or inprocessing briefings:

1. Determine if a soldier enlisted with an incentive/option for the LRP by just asking the soldier(s) to raise their hands during your in-briefing and instructing them to see you ASAP. Soldiers who do indicate that they did in fact enlist for the LRP should be provided with a referral to <http://www.armyeducation.army.mil>, which has critical LRP information under the heading entitled "Get College Loans Repaid."

2. LRP soldiers should also be advised that if they have not been contacted by EICB by their eighth month on active duty, then it is incumbent upon them to contact and coordinate directly with EICB. Such coordination is critical to the success of the LRP.

Payment on the soldier's loans by the Army cannot begin until soldiers have established a record with EICB and have also completed the required registration and loan documentation paperwork. LRP participants should also be reminded that if their loans change hands (i.e., are sold from one lender to another), then EICB must have the new lender's information in order for payments to continue. The toll free phone number, email and regular mail addresses for the EICB are posted on the above web address.

Time is Money

It is always the responsibility of the soldier to make sure the loan is repaid.

Note: It is not unusual for some LRP participants to wait 5-15 years before they bother to check to see why their loan has not been repaid.

Montgomery GI Bill – Changes Aboard

Public Law (PL) 107-14 enacted on 5 Jun 01 dramatically changed the MGIB Top-Up program in terms of how a soldier's remaining entitlement is reduced as a result of using Top-Up with tuition assistance (TA) while on active duty.

When the soldier uses the Top-Up program, it is important to bear in mind that what you are really talking about are two 36 months worth of eligibility: one for Top-Up and one for MGIB Chapter 30 remaining months of entitlement (used as a veteran or while on active duty).

Top-Up

The first 36 months pertain to months of top-up eligibility, which runs like a regular stopwatch. The watch is always ticking while the soldier is enrolled in a course(s) and is using Top-Up. The soldier will be able to use Top-Up for up to 36 months while on active duty.

Remember, for each month he/she is enrolled in a course(s), they will use up one month of Top-Up eligibility, regardless of their course load.

The most recent change (Jun 01), states that a soldier who uses Top-Up while on active duty will also use/lose some of their remaining Chapter 30 months of entitlement (see details below). The original Public Law 106-398 for Top-Up required dollar reduction from one's MGIB account, but preserved the soldier's months of MGIB Chapter 30 entitlement. The new law, which is retroactive to the program's inception, 30 Oct 00, requires a reduction in a soldier's months of entitlement in this manner.

For Instance:

If a soldier just has the basic MGIB (the current full-time MGIB rate for a veteran is \$650.00 per month), then that soldier will use/lose one full month's worth of MGIB entitlement from his Chapter 30 account for every \$650.00 paid in Top-Up.

Now, if the soldier has the MGIB + Army College Fund (ACF), and the full-time veteran's rate for that individual is \$1,200 per month, then that soldier would use/lose one month's worth of MGIB/ACF entitlement for every \$1200 paid in Top-Up. Of course lesser Top-Up payments would result in smaller losses/reductions of remaining entitlement, which reflect fractions of a month.

Continued Page 13

The VA really likes this change to the legislation, which is again retroactive to the program's inception date, 30 Oct 00. It is much easier for them to process and track months of entitlement vice dollars used.

NOTE: For individuals who have already submitted paperwork for Top-Up and/or been paid Top-Up, the VA will re-compute their Top-Up and MGIB account balance the next time the servicemember applies for Top-Up.

Contribution of \$600 for Soldiers on Terminal Leave

Many MGIB-era soldiers who separated from service this year were unaware that they may be eligible to increase their MGIB benefits by contributing an additional \$600. Soldiers who were discharged between enactment of PL 106-419 on 1 Nov 00, and the effective date of the law, 1 May 01, could have made contributions through the Department of Veterans Affairs between 1 May and 31 July 2001. Soldiers who entered a terminal leave status and separated service after 1 May 2001, should have been advised to fax or mail a copy of their DD Form 214, Member Copy 4, their DA Form 31, and their current mailing address to EICB. EICB processed requests postmarked by the law deadline of 31 July 2001.

Pending Legislation

Numerous bills are pending before Congress. Each bill in its own right, if passed, would significantly impact the MGIB, as we know it. A summary of pending legislation is in the attachment section.



Hail

Two new members were added to the ACES team, Mr. John Rizkallah and Ms. Jeanette Johnson. Mr. Rizkallah is the new Chief of the Education Incentives and Counseling Branch. He comes to ACES from the 1st Recruiting Brigade at Fort Meade, Md. Other assignments include: Manager, ASVAB Career Exploration Program, Lansing, Mich., MEPS; ACAP transition services specialist, Schweinfurt, Germany; and guidance counselor at Fulda and Baumholder, Germany. Mr. Rizkallah earned a master's in education from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell and a bachelor's degree from Northeastern University, Boston, Mass. Ms. Johnson comes to us, after working in ACES for 22 years, as the Contracting Officer's Representative for the Army-wide ACES contract to provide education functionality. Her ACES experiences cover tours in Korea, Europe, and other CONUS locations. Previous to this assignment, she was at Fort Gordon, Ga. Ms. Johnson received her undergraduate degree from Montclair State University in Upper Montclair, N.J., and her master's degree from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Ky. She is a 1997 graduate of the Army Management Staff College.

Farewell

Dr. Paula Harbecke left the Education Division on 15 Jun to assume responsibility as Provost of the School for International Training, a regionally accredited college of the World Learning Organization located in Brattleboro, Vermont. Dr. Harbecke was instrumental in working several key issues for ACES including designing a needs assessment model; conducting an Army-wide ACES distance learning analysis; providing guidance for the ACES Technology Economic Analysis and to the Army Research Institute on the study to measure impact of ACES on soldier retention and performance; conducting the National (Big Name) Schools Ranking Study; and performing a myriad of duties associated with eArmyU program management.

We would also like to say a "Retirement Farewell" to a long time member of the ACES Team - Mr. John Postillion. Mr. Scott Downing put together a few words, in the attachment section, to express his thoughts on Mr. Postillion's September retirement.



American Education Week

Several of you have called wanting to know what the theme is for the Army's celebration of American Education Week 2001. The Army's AEW theme is

"An Army of One, an Educational Opportunity for Every Soldier"

Included in the AEW marketing packet attachment is an AEW kickoff letter from Ms. Dian Stoskopf, a marketing plan with numerous suggestions, and several ideas for posters.

ACES Vision & Mission Poster

Calls were coming in for copies of the ACES Vision & Mission poster so Mr. Ben Dawson put together a design to showcase the feel of the new ACES challenges. Checkout the poster in the attachment section.

ACES Logo

The official ACES Shield is the one that has the colored books.



www.ArmyEducation.Army.Mil

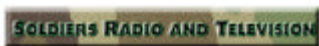
FORSCOM Announcement

FORSCOM's staff is proud to announce that their new homepage is up and running. The establishment of the FORSCOM ACES homepage was one of their goals that they identified at their December strategic planning session. Visit the site at http://freddie.forscom.army.mil/dcspim_aces/ (.mil access).

In the News



Reporter Ms. Gail Repsher Emery recently interviewed Ms. Kelley Mustion concerning the eArmyU program. The article, "Army Project Boosts E-Learning Prospects", focuses on the number of institutions, programs, and soldier participation and retention information as well as metrics established for evaluating program success. This is a follow-up article to the Dec 00 issue. For further information on the article go to http://www.washingtontechnology.com/news/16_8/federal/16859-1.html.



ACES - coming soon to your post cable television and radio stations. Soldiers Radio and Television (SRTV) recently conducted interviews concerning two education topics: Overseas Spouse Education Assistance Program (SEAP) and VEAP-era conversion to the Montgomery GI Bill. Mr. Mike Tevnan, ACES SEAP manager, and Ms. Diann Evans and COL (Ret.) Dennis Spiegel, Army Emergency Relief, spoke on how spouses, while stationed overseas with their sponsors, may be eligible for education assistance. Mr. John Rizkallah's interview, EICB, focused on the benefits of the VEAP conversion to the Montgomery GI Bill.



Mr. Rizkallah and Ms. Martha Mraz of EICB were interviewed by Mr. Jim Tice of the Army Times. The two articles focused on the VEAP conversion to the Montgomery GI Bill (2 Jul 01) and Top-Up (16 Jul 01).

